



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Foreign  
Agricultural  
Service

# FACT SHEET

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February 2006

## *TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SPECIALTY CROPS PROGRAM*

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 created the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) Program and authorized the use of \$2 million of Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) resources in each fiscal year from 2002 through 2007.

**How the program benefits U.S. agriculture:** TASC is designed to assist U.S. organizations by providing funding for projects that address sanitary, phytosanitary and technical barriers that prohibit or threaten the export of U.S. specialty crops. For purposes of the TASC program, a “specialty crop” is defined as all cultivated plants and the products, thereof, produced in the United States, *except* wheat, feed grains, oilseeds, cotton, rice, peanuts, sugar and tobacco. Examples of activities these grants may cover include seminars and workshops, study tours, field surveys, pest and disease research, and pre-clearance programs.

**How the program works:** TASC proposals are accepted from any U.S. organization, including, but not limited to: U.S. government agencies, state government agencies, non-profit trade associations, universities, agricultural cooperatives and private companies. The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), which administers the program, provides grant funds as direct assistance to U.S. organizations. Applicant contributions are not required, but strongly encouraged.

Each year, USDA announces an application period for participation in TASC, publishing it in the *Federal Register*. TASC applications undergo a competitive review process based on criteria specified in 7 FCR, part 1487, and in the *Federal Register* announcement. Funds are awarded to applicants that demonstrate how their project will overcome trade barriers resulting in market access retention and expansion for specialty crops. Award maximums are \$250,000 per year, and for activities of up to three years. Proposals may target any eligible export market, including single countries or reasonable regional groupings of countries. Applicants may submit multiple proposals, but no TASC participant may have more than three projects underway at the same time. FAS sets a program funding level for each approved application and signs a program agreement with the participant. Funds may be requested as advance payments or on a

reimbursement basis. Participants are required to maintain records and documents associated with the program agreement. All projects are subject to review by U.S. government officials.

**Where to get information:** To submit a TASC proposal or to find more about the program, contact the USDA-FAS Marketing Operations Staff AG Box 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250-1042; Phone: (202) 720-4327; on the Internet at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/mos/tasc/tasc.asp>.

Information on FAS programs, trade data and reports are available by accessing the FAS Home Page at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov>.

**Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Allocations  
Fiscal Year 2005**

| <b>TASC Funding Recipient</b>                         | <b>Commodity Benefited</b> | <b>Amount</b>    |
|---|----------------------------|------------------|
| Ginseng Board of Wisconsin                            | Ginseng                    | \$76,500         |
| National Potato Council                               | Potatoes                   | \$120,000        |
| Northwest Horticultural Council                       | Apples                     | \$66,800         |
| Regents of the University of California,<br>Riverside | Navel oranges              | \$66,929         |
| Virginia Christmas Tree Growers<br>Association        | Christmas trees            | \$83,410         |
| <b>Total</b>  |                            | <b>\$413,639</b> |